



Department of Justice

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ORLANDO INDICTMENT CHARGES **31 DEFENDANTS IN COCAINE CONSPIRACY**

Orlando, Florida - Acting United States Attorney James R. Klindt today announced the return of an indictment of thirty-one defendants, charging them with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine. The maximum penalties each defendant faces if convicted is life imprisonment and a fine of \$4,000,000. (See attached chart with defendants names.)

A separate count of the indictment charges Miguel Antonio Montes, Luis Gonzalez, and Giorliana Cortijo with conspiracy to commit money laundering. The maximum penalties each defendant faces if convicted is twenty years' imprisonment and a fine of \$500,000.

These indictments are a follow-up to a June 12, 2007, round-up when more than 100 law enforcement officers executed five search warrants and located and arrested 28 of the 31 individuals charged in a complaint.

The search warrants were executed at the following locations:

- 1) **2760 Michigan Ave., Suite 5, Kissimmee**, which is the business of Miguel Antonio Montes, a/k/a "Tony Montana"
- 2) **7324 Windham Harbour Avenue, Orlando**, which is the residence of Miguel Antonio Montes, a/k/a "Tony Montana"

- 3) **6090 Tivoli Garden Boulevard, Orlando**, which is the residence of Luis J. Gonzalez
- 4) **732 North Dean Road, Orlando**, which is the residence of Ricardo Ortiz
- 5) **6130 Curry Ford Road, Apt 158, Orlando**, which is the residence of Georliana Cortijo

According to court documents, the investigation leading to the criminal complaint and indictment began in August of 2006 when agents began looking into a Drug Trafficking Organization (DTO) that used the U.S. mail to ship kilograms of cocaine from Puerto Rico to the Orlando area. In some instances the shipper mailed one to three kilos at a time to a recipient who had agreed to accept the drugs. The senders also tried to conceal the recipients' true identities by addressing the packages to fictitious names. The parcels were sent to various locations including private residences, businesses and apartments.

The court documents allege that the DTO recruited individuals who were paid small sums of money, typically \$100 to \$1,000, to accept packages containing the drugs. These recipients were instructed to contact a member of the DTO by telephone and then another member of the DTO would pick up the parcel containing the cocaine. In some cases, the drugs were shipped to an unwitting person's location or an unoccupied location. In those instances, the actual intended recipient waited nearby during the time of delivery, posed as the addressee and accepted delivery. Investigators estimate the DTO was responsible for the shipment of 40-50 kilos of cocaine weekly beginning as far back as November of 2005.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Florida Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution and the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Osceola County

Investigative Bureau, the Orlando Police Department, the Orange County Sheriff's Office, the Sarasota Police Department, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives assisted in the investigation. This matter is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Bruce Ambrose.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until proven guilty.